

Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following new paragraph after the Title and before the first paragraph on page 1.

This application is a U.S. National Phase Application of PCT International Application No. PCT/ES2003/000612 filed December 1, 2003.

Please replace the paragraph at page 3, line 30 with the following rewritten paragraph:

One ~~objective-exemplary embodiment~~ of the present invention ~~is that of~~ providing an article-positioning machine based on the cited principle of allowing the articles drop into alignment conduits, capable of positioning more than one article in each alignment conduit during one revolution or cycle.

Please replace the paragraph at page 4, line 1 with the following rewritten paragraph:

Another ~~objective-exemplary embodiment~~ of the present invention ~~is that such~~ provides a machine ~~includes-which further comprises~~ the means to adjust the housings and alignment conduit to articles of various sizes.

Please replace the heading at page 4, line 5 with the following amended heading:

~~Disclosure~~ Brief description of the invention

Please replace the paragraph at page 4, line 6 with the following rewritten paragraph:

In accordance with the present invention, the previous and other objectives are achieved, producing an article-positioning machine of the type comprising the means to collect the articles in a plurality of individual housings that move in a closed circuit and, in at least one drop zone, allows the orientated articles to drop inside a corresponding alignment conduit that moves together with each housing and the means of exit to extract the orientated and aligned articles from the said conduits onto an exit conveyor belt. ~~The machine is characterised in that each~~ Each alignment conduit comprises an upper portion for collecting the articles from the corresponding housing, at least one moving intermediate portion defining at least one conduit, and a lower portion for receiving the articles comprising at least two compartments, with a stationary support plane interposed between the intermediate and lower portions, with drive means incorporated to selectively move said intermediate portion in order to face said conduit to the upper portion and receive an article from the same, and/or face the conduit to one or

other said at least two compartments of the lower portion to transfer said article through at least one interruption existing in said support plane.

Please replace the paragraph at page 6, line 2 with the following rewritten paragraph:

First referring to Fig. 1, this schematically shows a possible configuration for a machine in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the present invention adapted for positioning articles Z in the form of empty lightweight containers (see Figs. 2 to 4) with a differentiated configuration Z1, or neck, at one end and a base Z2 at the other end, with an imaginary longitudinal axis defined between both ends. In an illustrated example, the machine has a circular configuration and comprises a fixed frame, a rotating structure and a surrounding exterior wall (not shown). In an upper peripheral zone of the rotating structure, a plurality of individual housings 10 are arranged; each one adapted to receive an article Z in a horizontal arrangement and with its longitudinal axis pre-orientated in accordance with the tangential direction the cited housing. A corresponding alignment conduit 3 is arranged underneath each housing 10 and fixed to the rotating structure, so that each alignment conduit 3 is moved together with its housing 10. Each alignment conduit 3 comprises an upper portion 20 for collecting articles Z from the corresponding housing 10, at least one intermediate moving position 30, defining a pair of conduits 31, 32 and a lower portion 40 for receiving articles Z comprising three compartments 41, 42, 43. The upper 20, intermediate 30 and lower 40 portions comprising the alignment conduits 3 have open exterior parts that are delimited by the mentioned surrounding exterior wall (not shown), which is stationary. The machine includes well-known exit means (not shown) to extract the orientated and aligned articles Z from said alignment conduits 3 onto an exit conveyor belt.